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COMPULSORY EDUCATION, THE SOLUTION OF CHILD LABOR PROBLEM¹

BY LEWIS W. PARKER,
Greenville, S. C.

A recent number of *THE ANNALS* of the American Academy of Political and Social Science is devoted to the child labor problem, and upon reference to that publication it appears that credit is claimed for various states and communities as being the first to agitate this issue in the South. Among others claiming priority, the Rev. C. B. Wilmer, of Georgia, claims priority for his state, and dates the agitation on the subject from the year 1901. If this is the earliest date yet established I must say that you are all in the wrong and that South Carolina in this, as in many other questions, can claim priority. Not only can the claim be made in behalf of South Carolina, but by the cotton manufacturers of South Carolina. For many years prior to 1901 the probable evil results of the employment of children in manufacturing had been fully recognized by many of the cotton mill owners of the state, and steps had been taken, certainly to lessen if not altogether to remedy the evil. In the publication above mentioned, Mrs. Florence Kelley, the secretary of the National Consumers' League, a devoted and zealous advocate of legislation in the interest, as she conceives, not only of children but of American citizenship, refers to the hypocritical attitude of those who would contend that in this country we have not the evil and therefore need do nothing about it.

I certainly have no desire to be characterized as a hypocrite and therefore should not for one moment contend that the evil of the employment of child labor does not exist, nor would I for a moment contend that nothing need be done about it. On the contrary, any intelligent observer must recognize the evil, though opinions may differ as to the remedy and as to the character of the relief to be applied. I believe it is Thomas Carlyle who defines orthodoxy as "my-doxy" and heterodoxy as "your-doxy." Certain

¹See Proceedings of the Fourth Annual Meeting for a discussion of this article.

it is that an unfortunate proportion of those who would characterize themselves as reformers are uncharitable in their conception of the attitude of those who may doubt the wisdom of the policies advocated. They are too apt to brush away any suggestions from others—who may be, from practical experience, more familiar with conditions than they—with the statement that those others are hypocritical or are false in their statement of facts, or are misleading in their deductions from the facts.

A noted reformer stated that no reform could be accomplished without exaggerations. Certainly the advocates of child labor legislation have accepted this statement, for statements made, both as to the extent and as to the effects of child labor, have been much exaggerated. Still, with all this, as I have stated, the evil does exist and there is no advantage or necessity in attempting to minimize it if a correction can be found.

My own connection with cotton manufacturing in the South does not date farther back than twelve years, but within that time I have seen a tremendous development of the industry. In my own State of South Carolina I have seen the number of spindles in operation more than trebled in that period, and consequently the number of employees increased in a somewhat less proportion. With such unparalleled development of the industry I have seen therefore its expansion beyond the immediate possibilities of a proper labor supply, and consequently I have been aware of the temptation to the manufacturer to employ those not suitable for work in the industry.

It would be folly to contend that the proportion of children in the Southern cotton mills was no greater than in the cotton mills of other portions of the Union. The causes of this, however, are evident, and almost equally evident is the method of relief. If he be a public benefactor who makes two blades of grass to grow where but one grew before, equally is he a benefactor who gives occupation to those who were previously without occupation. The close of the war found a large population in the South without means of support. The struggles of the reconstruction period but increased the unfortunate condition of a large portion of our Southern population, who were engaged, to a very large extent, in agricultural pursuits. The steady decline in the price of cotton, the chief product of our labor, served to still further increase our misfortunes. When

there was opened up to our population a means of livelihood through the development of the cotton mill industry, there was naturally an influx to cotton mill communities by those who had been unsuccessful in agricultural and other pursuits.

When it is remembered that in a period of twenty-five years the cotton mill industry has developed forty-fold, and that consequently the proportion of population engaged in the industry has so greatly increased, it is not strange that there should have been in connection with it certain evils. More strange is it that there was on the part of a large proportion of the Southern manufacturers a recognition at a very early date of those evils and an earnest effort, almost from the start, to correct and anticipate such evils. We find that almost from the commencement of the development in the early eighties the necessity of the education of the employees and of their moral and intellectual uplift was recognized. Indeed, as far back as the early fifties, the pioneer of the cotton mill industry in South Carolina, the president of the Graniteville Manufacturing Company, in making his report to the stockholders as to the causes which had made the industry up to that time unsuccessful in South Carolina, mentioned as one of them "the lack of proper effort for the religious and moral training of the operatives." A recognition of this necessity therefore existed when the industry took on a new life in the early eighties, and it is no exaggeration to say that in the development of the first mills during that period, as in the construction of practically each mill thereafter, the schoolhouse and the church were an accompaniment to the construction of the mill building itself.

The poverty of the people of the South has made it impossible for them to do all that has been done in other communities towards the education of the population. Certain it is, however, that in no section of the Union has there been a truer recognition of the necessity of this education. When at times reference is made to the large proportion of illiteracy existing among us, we are too apt to express our feeling of humiliation, rather than to express that other more proper sentiment, namely, pride at the way in which we have overcome the difficulties attendant upon the procuring of an education in the South, and pride in the record which we are making in that respect.

The census of 1900 is in many respects a glorious exhibit

for us. It displayed to the people of the world for the first time a wonderful record of industrial development; but above all it displayed an equally wonderful record of educational development and growth. From that census it appears that the Southern States in the proportion of their population attendant upon schools, exceed any other section of this Union. Taking as an illustration my own State of South Carolina, that census showed that notwithstanding the large negro population in the State, of whom a lesser proportion than of the whites attend school, 21.61 per cent of the whole population were in school. The same census shows that in the great State of New York only 16.59 per cent attended; in the great western State of Michigan only 20.39 per cent, and that in that state of the East which continually prides itself upon its educational facilities, Massachusetts, only 16.12 per cent of the population were in attendance on schools. This is a record to be proud of, but when a closer inspection is made of the census, and an examination of the percentage of white population in school is made, the disproportion existing between the Southern States and other sections of the Union is even greater. It is shown that of the white population, South Carolina, which is merely typical of other states of the South, had 25.23 per cent in schools; whereas New York had but 16.40 per cent, Massachusetts but 16.07 per cent and Michigan but 19.64 per cent of their native white population. I do not feel, therefore, that there is any apology to be made in behalf of the South for its educational development. On the contrary, there is every reason to be proud of our record and of the proof of educational zeal and ambition. When reference is made to the large proportion of illiterates, reply can justly be made that to a large extent these were illiterate consequent upon misfortunes of war, and that even though the percentage remained large in later periods, this was still the result of a poverty consequent upon the same cause.

When, therefore, I would advocate compulsory education as a solution of the child labor question, I do so not from any view that the South is not doing a great deal in the cause of education, but rather from the view that there is much yet to be done, and that we cannot afford to rest upon our laurels.

If we are to accept the words of those who now pride themselves upon the supposed results of child labor agitation, this agita-

tion commenced about the year 1900 or 1901; yet even as far back as that date we find the manufacturers of South Carolina uniting in a request to the legislature of their state for the enactment of three laws: the first, compulsory education itself, as being the solution of the child labor question; secondly, a birth registration law, as a necessary incident to any child labor legislation or any educational law; and third, for a marriage license law, as being necessary for the morality of the state, and particularly for maintaining morality in concentrated industries, such as cotton manufacturing. This agitation on the part of the manufacturers has been repeated each year. In its early years, there were found in the legislature few supporters of compulsory education, a large majority of our solons believing that it was not practicable, owing to the large proportion of negro population. The movement, however, has continued to grow in strength and within the last year or two the bill has missed its passage in the legislature by a very narrow margin. I have every reason to believe that within a comparatively short time compulsory education will be a settled fact in South Carolina. In January, 1907, the Cotton Manufacturers' Association of South Carolina, through its constituted committee, made its last appeal to the legislature upon this question and I cannot do better than insert here the words of that appeal:

To the Honorable Senate and House of Representatives of the State of South Carolina:

The undersigned committee was appointed by a meeting of the South Carolina cotton manufacturers, held at Greenville, S. C., June 5, 1906, and representing nine-tenths of the state's spindleage, with instructions to memorialize your honorable body, urging the passage of: 1st, A compulsory education law; 2d, a marriage license law; 3d, a law requiring the registration of births.

The three subjects will be briefly mentioned in reverse order to the above, the intent of this memorial being, not to enumerate the many arguments which might be advanced in favor of the passage of the laws suggested, but chiefly to put the state's textile manufacturers squarely and definitely on record as favoring and earnestly urging such legislation.

REGISTRATION OF BIRTHS.

The lack of proper registration of births and consequently inability to ascertain positively the ages of children is a constant hindrance to those who are conscientiously trying to adhere rigidly to the requirements of the recently enacted law governing the employment of children of tender years—commonly known as the "Child Labor Law."

In fact, this absence of age record is in many instances a shield to grasping and unscrupulous parents against whose greed the law is intended to operate. It is true it will take time for such a record to be of value, but this merely emphasizes the importance of delaying no longer in commencing the accumulation of data, the need for which is already at hand.

MARRIAGE LICENSE.

Our state's position as to divorce is well known. Is it not by reason thereof specially incumbent upon us to throw greater safeguards around the entering into marriage relation? The early age at which matrimonial alliances are formed is in itself startling. The frequency with which the relation is severed—merely by mutual consent or by desertion—is a deplorable menace to morals. We voice the sentiments, not only of the mill managers, but we believe of the more thoughtful and discerning mill operatives, when we urge the requiring of marriage licenses, and greater watchfulness as to the violations of existing laws.

COMPULSORY EDUCATION.

Irrevocably opposed, as we are, to "class legislation"—to the passage of any laws designed either to exercise restraint over, or to accord special privileges to, any one class of our citizens alone—we have been unable to give our support to measures heretofore introduced intended to require school attendance on the part of cotton mill operatives only.

We admit that the facilities now provided by many of the mill corporations, the longer term of the mill schools, etc., would emphasize the necessity of compelling the youth of the cotton mill villages to accept the educational advantages thus afforded.

Still it must be remembered that it is from the farms that the bulk of our textile workers have come, and are still coming, and that the statistics as to lack of education—so easily obtained from the compact mill village—still reflect to a greater extent the educational deficiencies of the remote rural districts.

There are already more negro children than whites enrolled in the public schools of our State—the percentage of attendance of the negro children is larger. How much longer will the senseless fear of forcing (?) the negroes into school deter us from requiring an acceptance by the children of illiterate whites of the opportunities of learning which our public school system offers? Through what other method can a more intelligent citizenship be obtained?

We earnestly urge, hence, the passage of a law compelling school attendance by all children between the ages of eight and twelve, regardless of residence or avocation of parents.

JOHN A. LAW, *Chairman*,
R. E. LIGON,
J. ADGER SMYTH, JR.,
E. F. VERDERY,
GEO. W. SUMMER,
J. M. GEER.

I know that opinions differ as to the question of precedence between child labor legislation and compulsory education. Some there be who argue that compulsory education is a sequence rather than a precedent to an effectual child labor law. Others—and among those I must class myself—claim that the compulsory education law is in itself the best child labor law. The child labor law is merely negative in its effect. It may keep the child out of occupation, but it does not keep him out of mischief, nor does it do anything to improve him so as to make him in the future a useful citizen. The compulsory education law, on the other hand, necessarily keeps a child out of any gainful occupation which may be harmful to it. In addition to that, it affords affirmative relief in that it does tend towards the improvement of the child and does tend to make that child prepared to be a future useful and gainful citizen. In states where the child labor law has been tried without compulsory education, this has, I think, become recognized.

I cannot state this conclusion in better words than it is stated by a report of the chairman of the Wisconsin Child Labor Committee, appearing in the publication heretofore referred to, where he says: "The Wisconsin Committee is convinced that child labor laws standing by themselves, even if they are modern in form, are too often a mockery of legislation, unless they are accompanied by satisfactory and thoroughly enforced education and truancy laws, and by ungraded rooms and schools, playgrounds and park facilities, and in general, unless when employment is denied children, school and vacation facilities are given and school attendance compelled. Our committee therefore seeks not only a child labor law which shall be practical and modern in the best sense, but also to keep fully abreast (and if possible in advance of that standard) the educational system of the state, including compulsory education laws and satisfactory truancy laws." . . . Undesirable as are certain forms of child labor, and much as we may look forward to a time when no child under sixteen shall be employed at gainful occupations; the fact remains that under existing conditions, a great number of such children must work for wages, and that it is far worse to have children in idleness on the streets, studying in the school of crime, because of the lack of proper educational laws and of vacation schools and playgrounds and other proper and normal ways to use the abounding strength of childhood.

But there is another view in which I feel the compulsory education law is to be preferred to the child labor law, while accomplishing the same object, namely, keeping the child out of the factory. Unquestionably the child cannot be both at school and at work, and therefore a compulsory education law is, as stated, a child labor law. The census of 1900, to which reference has been made, showed that whereas in 1870, the number of wage-earners employed in cotton mills formed only 13 per cent of the number employed in all industries in the State of South Carolina; by 1905 this per cent had been increased to 62, and a recent compilation by Mr. Watson, the State Labor Commissioner, would indicate that in 1907 the per cent had increased to probably 80 per cent of all employees in all industries. A child labor bill, therefore, in South Carolina is too evidently a bill aimed at cotton manufacturers and at cotton mill employees. Inasmuch as these employees constitute a great majority of the wage-earners in industrial enterprises, such a bill is necessarily aimed at them. No such objection can be made to a compulsory education law. Such a law is aimed at all classes and affects all classes alike. An illiterate and ignorant cotton mill employee is not the citizen he should be, neither is an illiterate and ignorant employee in any other vocation such a citizen as is to be desired. The compulsory education law would tend to raise the standard of all classes of citizens and would bear equally upon all. Why, therefore, should laws be passed applicable, if not in terms, at least in effect, upon practically one class only, when an equal and more advantageous law can be passed applicable to the class which may be sought to be reached, and equally applicable to all other classes?

There is an unfortunate tendency in the public mind to classify cotton mill employees as a class to themselves. Constituting as they do in certain sections of the South, the largest proportion of industrial wage-earners, any law which would tend to exaggerate this present tendency of classification is unfortunate. The compulsory education law, on the contrary, does not exaggerate that tendency, but decreases it, as it brings all classes of citizens under the same terms. This has been the position of the cotton manufacturers of our State, in antagonizing legislation of any character which sought to apply particularly to cotton mill employees. They have felt that any laws which were applicable to the citizens in other vocations should be made applicable to those in cotton mills,

but that it was neither just nor expedient to single out the cotton mill industry as the industry to be reached by special legislation. For this reason we have opposed in all earnestness laws seeking to apply educational qualifications to children employed in the mills unless such educational qualifications were applied equally to children of those in other vocations. But while taking that position, we have urged with equal earnestness, as shown in the appeal to the legislature heretofore referred to, the passage of a compulsory education law applicable to all classes.

The cotton mill manager fully realizes the benefit coming to him from an intelligent and educated laborer. He wishes such a class of labor. It has been his misfortune that a large proportion of the labor heretofore coming to him has not been of that class, and has therefore served to limit the scope of his manufacturing. The tendency in the South is to get away from that class of goods which in the early ages of cotton manufacturing it was thought could alone be made in the South. The tendency is towards a higher and better class of work, and the cotton mill manager appreciates that to be successful in this class of work and to compete with the best New England and English mills, he must have the best class of labor. He therefore welcomes any law, including the compulsory education law, which tends to elevate and improve the condition of his labor.

I do not think the earnestness with which the Southern cotton manufacturers, as a rule, have striven to prevent the setting apart of the cotton mill employees as a class has been fully appreciated, or that the unfortunate results of such a classification are fully known. It is to make the cotton mill employees of the same type as other classes of citizens; it is to raise their ideals and to improve their characters that we find a continuous progress on the part of the cotton mill manager, in the establishment of schools and churches, or young men's and young women's Christian associations, in the institution of libraries, lyceums, gymnasiums, swimming pools, parks and playgrounds. It is for the same causes that our employees are constantly encouraged to take an active part in the duties of citizenship, to serve on juries, to attend political conventions and to assert themselves in juries and conventions. In other words, it is our earnest desire to bring these employees up to the full measure of the average citizenship of our state, and anything

which tends toward that end meets, as a rule, the hearty approbation of the mill manager. Likewise, anything which tends to degrade or lower the employees as a class meets our earnest and persistent disapprobation.

Contrasting, therefore, the child labor law with the compulsory education law, we feel that one tends to degrade, the other does not, in contrast with other classes of citizens.

As I stated previously, there is at all times a tendency on the part of those seeking social reforms to exaggerate the extent of the evils at which they reach. I, on my part, would not minimize the extent of child labor or the evil of it. At the same time, I cannot think that advantage comes of a reform caused by exaggerated and misleading statements.

I trust that the officers of your Committee, under whose auspices this meeting is held and at whose invitation I speak here to-day, will not misunderstand or be offended, when I refer to some of their own statements as both misleading and exaggerated. In an article published by one of them in a prominent magazine it was stated: "Sixty thousand little children are to-day toiling in Southern cotton mills; little girls eight years old work through a twelve-hour night." In the Outlook this advertisement was printed by your committee: "The National Child Labor Committee wants your help to rescue two million children from premature labor." Dr. McKelway, the Assistant Secretary of your Committee, in an article appearing in *THE ANNALS* of the American Academy of Political and Social Science, to which I have heretofore referred, reaffirms these statements in an article entitled: "South Awakening Against Child Labor," and among other things, says: "An estimate of mine, published a year ago, that there were sixty thousand children under fourteen in Southern cotton mills has been widely challenged and abusively denied." Again he says: "Fortunately for the cause of the children, a recent study of the population tables of 1900 gives the result of that house-to-house canvass as to the number of children ten to fifteen years of age, engaged in particular industries. From that we learn (Census Bulletin 69) that three out of ten operatives in Southern cotton mills are from ten to fifteen years of age. This takes no account of quite a considerable number of children under ten so employed. . . . But three out of ten is thirty per cent, or 62,700 children from ten to fifteen years of age, to which two or

three thousand should be added for children under ten years of age. It is my opinion that the percentage of children employed has increased since 1900 on account of the shortage of the labor supply and demand for more operatives caused by the increase of fifty-five per cent in the number of spindles since 1900. The figure given, 60,000 children under fourteen, is thus seen to be a conservative estimate."

It is true that the census of 1900 does show that there are in the United States 1,750,178 children ten to fifteen years of age engaged in gainful pursuits, but of this number 1,061,971 are reported in the same census as being engaged in agricultural pursuits, as to which the statistician, in the same report, says: "There is one broad class of occupations in which child labor is not open to most of the objections ordinarily urged against it. These are the occupations connected with agriculture. The work of the child on the farm is usually not injurious to health or morals, and does not necessarily interfere with the opportunities for schooling. . . . It is important at the outset to call attention to the fact that about two-thirds of the total number of child bread-winners were employed on the farm and that most of these children were members of farmers' families." Of the remaining number of child laborers ten to fifteen years of age, not engaged on the farms, to wit: 688,207, he says: "But of the total number of children, in the aggregate 310,826, or nearly one-half, were fifteen years of age, and 501,849, or over two-thirds, were either fourteen or fifteen years of age, at which age the evils of child labor are not generally regarded as serious, except in a few occupations of exceptionally injurious or objectionable character, the range of which is somewhat larger for female children than for male.

"If the children fourteen to fifteen years of age are eliminated from the above total, there remain 186,358 children representing the number of child bread-winners ten to thirteen years of age, exclusive of those employed on the farm. The child labor problem, so far as it may be measured by the twelfth census statistics, is for the most part restricted to this group, which includes practically all of the child bread-winners enumerated by the census, whose employment is itself regarded as a grave evil and a menace to the welfare of the Union, and on the other hand probably includes comparatively few whose employment is entirely unobjectionable."

It will be noted, therefore, that your committee's two million children to be rescued from premature labor has dwindled down to 186,000, and the measure of the exaggeration is ten to one, which I do not think is to be regarded as a gross exaggeration in comparison with most reformers. The figures are equally wide of the mark when consideration is given to the conditions in the Southern cotton mills. The original statement appears to have been that "Sixty thousand *little* children are to-day toiling in Southern cotton mills." I take it that "little" children, as ordinarily construed, would certainly mean children less than twelve or thirteen years of age. In fact, I think it would be generally understood as children less than twelve years of age. I hardly think that even a child of thirteen is to be characterized as a "little child." Be that as it may, the census of 1900, as reported in Bulletin No. 69 of the Department of Commerce and Labor, shows that there were in the whole United States 18,926 children from ten to thirteen years of age engaged in cotton mills. Of this number, 16,105 are shown to be in the Southern states, which is a lamentable and regrettable fact. There is, however, a great disproportion between that 16,000 and the 60,000 claimed.

"But," says your assistant secretary, Dr. McKelway, "this census is of the year 1900, whereas there has been a great increase since that date." His opinion on this subject is not borne out by any statistics to which he can refer. In the census of manufactures given in Table 31 of Bulletin 69, heretofore referred to, it is shown that the total number of children at work in Southern cotton mills, ten to fifteen years of age, increased in the Southern states from 1900 to 1905 only 2,828, and whereas the number of adult males increased in that period 36 per cent, it appears by the report that the increase of children ten to fifteen years of age was only 11 per cent, indicating a great decrease in the proportion of children employed.

But, as I have previously shown, the census statistics show that over two-thirds of the children reported in the census of 1900, ten to fifteen years of age, as being in gainful employment, were over thirteen years of age. Assuming therefore that this proportion holds good in 1905, it would appear that of the children in Southern cotton mills, ten to fifteen years of age, to wit: 28,135, two-thirds, or approximately 19,000, were over thirteen years of age, leaving therefore only approximately 9,000 as being ten to thirteen years

of age. Thus do the 62,000 estimated by Dr. McKelway dwindle to 9,000, or an exaggeration of seven to one. "But," says Dr. McKelway, "the census figures of 1905 were obtained from the manufacturers, and therefore cannot be relied upon, but fortunately for the cause of the children, a recent study of the population tables of 1900 gives the result of that house-to-house canvass as to the number of children ten to fifteen years of age engaged in particular industries."

That house-to-house canvass to which Dr. McKelway refers shows, as stated in Table 30 of Bulletin 69, that whereas the manufacturers in 1900 reported 25,307 children ten to fifteen years of age as working in Southern cotton mills, a house-to-house canvass showed 27,661 or a variation of approximately 10 per cent. The statistician of the census is more charitable than Dr. McKelway, and does not think that this variation of 10 per cent necessarily arises from deception on the part of the manufacturers, but he explains the difference by stating: "The variations between the census of the population and that of manufacturers in the figures presented for 1900 are, of course, due to differences in the character of the two censuses. The figures for manufacturers give the average number of wage earners of all ages employed during the year about the cotton mills in any capacity. The figures for population, on the other hand, give the total number of persons in the population at least ten years of age who reported themselves as having occupation peculiar to the cotton mills, although those persons at the time of the census may not have been actually engaged in the pursuit of such occupation."

Is not this a natural explanation? The manufacturer reports his employees at a certain date, or during an average period. The census enumerator reports those who call themselves employees, but who may not have been at work at the actual time that the manufacturer made his report. Be that as it may, the Census Bulletin No. 69, in Table 31, makes an estimate of the children at work in the cotton mills of the South, based upon "the assumption that an enumeration of the population would disclose an increase or decrease proportionally to that shown by a comparison with the reports of manufacturers for 1900 and 1905." And the census therefore estimates that the number of children ten to fifteen years of age in Southern cotton mills in 1905 was 31,085, or an increase

over the number reported by the manufacturers themselves of slightly less than 3,000, or in other words a variation of approximately ten per cent.

Assuming therefore the correctness of this estimate of the census, and assuming the usual proportion over and under thirteen years of age to exist, it would appear that two-thirds of the 31,085, or approximately 20,000, were fourteen years of age and over, and only approximately 10,000 were thirteen years of age or under. Our friend again has exaggerated six to one.

That the tendency is toward the employment of more mature persons and not toward the employment of children in at least the South Carolina mills, is fully shown in a summary of the South Carolina textile industry appearing in the "Handbook of South Carolina," issued by Hon. E. J. Watson, State Commissioner of Agriculture, Commerce and Immigration. On page 467 of this handbook it is shown that in 1900, the total number of employees of the South Carolina mills was 30,201, of which 8,110 were children under sixteen; in 1905 the total number of employees was 37,271, of which 8,835 were children under sixteen; and in 1907, the total number of employees was 54,887, of which 8,121 were under sixteen years of age. In other words, although from 1900 to 1907, inclusive, the number of employees in South Carolina mills had almost doubled, there was an increase of but eleven children in the number under sixteen years of age. This certainly should be a gratifying exhibit, and should be a proof of the desire and willingness of the manufacturers of South Carolina to conform to the law of the state with reference to the employment of children, and furthermore, a proof of the fact that they appreciate that the employment of children is not to their advantage, either economically or otherwise.

The census of 1905 further discloses that in South Carolina in 1900, the population of mill villages was 61,468, the number of employees 30,201, or a percentage of employees to population of 49 per cent. The census of 1905 shows a population in mill villages of 86,966, with employees of 37,271, or a percentage of employees to population of 42.8 per cent. Do not these figures show therefore a perceptible decrease of employees in occupation, and a deduction that the cause of this is the less necessity on the part of the male head of the family to seek the assistance of his children and wife in the efforts for support? An estimate of the population of mill

villages in 1907, with the number of employees, still further shows this tendency and reduces the percentage of employees to population to 40 per cent, illustrating and proving the same tendency.

As is well known, the cotton manufacturing industry in South Carolina, as indeed in nearly all the Southern states, is concentrated in what is known as the Piedmont region. The number of spindles in the cotton mills of South Carolina in 1907 was 3,688,761, as against approximately 9,000,000 in the whole South; or, in other words, 40 per cent of the spindleage of the South is in South Carolina. Of the South Carolina spindleage, 1,962,064, or more than one-half of the whole, are to be found in the counties of Greenville, Spartanburg, Union and Anderson, adjacent counties, and all in what is known as the Piedmont section of the state. If, as contended by Dr. McKelway, there has been a large increase in the employment of children, then certainly the school statistics of these four counties should prove such a fact. Whereas, these school statistics, with the compilation of which the cotton manufacturers had nothing to do, distinctly prove otherwise. These school statistics are prepared by the state superintendent of education, and cover the whole state, and have no reference whatever to manufacturing conditions.

The report of the state superintendent of education for the scholastic year 1906, shows that the population of South Carolina in that year, based upon an estimate of increase over the census of 1900, was 1,467,391, and that the school enrollment for the state during that year was 314,399, or the percentage heretofore referred to of 21.61 per cent of the population enrolled in schools. The estimated white population of the state in 1906 was 601,631; the enrollment of white school children for the year was 24 per cent of the white population. The enrollment in the negro schools was 19.6 per cent of the negro population. In Spartanburg County the estimated population was 71,662 and the school enrollment was 25.2 per cent of the population. In Greenville County the estimated population was 58,998 and the school enrollment was 23.9 per cent. In Anderson County the estimated population was 62,940 and the school enrollment was 23.5 per cent. In Union County the population was 25,579 and the school enrollment was 30.3 per cent of the population. In other words, the average of the four cotton mill counties was 25.7 per cent, as against the average for the whole state of

21.6 per cent. It shows, therefore, at least that a full percentage of children, as contrasted with the remainder of the State, are attending schools in the four counties referred to. When it is remembered that those living in the cotton mill villages of South Carolina number approximately one-fifth of the entire white population of the state and nearly one-third of the entire population, white and colored, of the four counties referred to, it would seem that if there were the enormous number of children supposed by Dr. McKelway to be in the mills, the proportion of children attending the schools could not be greater than the average throughout the remainder of the state.

This comparison is made even more interesting when contrast is had with other counties of the state in which there are no cotton mills, or in which, if there be any, they are so small in number and size as to be no important factor in population. I have contrasted, therefore, the four Piedmont counties referred to with the four counties of Orangeburg, Colleton, Horry and Sumter, two of which—Orangeburg and Sumter—are among the leading agricultural counties of the state. Colleton and Horry, while not so important in their population or wealth as the other two, are nevertheless good counties, and Horry has one of the largest proportions of whites to blacks to be found in any county in South Carolina. These four counties show a proportion of school enrollment to population as follows: Orangeburg, 23.9 per cent; Colleton, 18.4 per cent; Horry, 23.2 per cent; Sumter 21.9 per cent; or an average for the four counties of 21.9 per cent.

To summarize, the four leading cotton mill counties show a proportion of school enrollment to population of 25.7 per cent. Four equally representative agricultural and non-cotton mill counties show a school enrollment in relation to population of 21.9 per cent. Does this not speak volumes in itself, and do these figures not clearly prove that the cotton mill population of South Carolina is securing the advantages of schooling in full proportion to other sections of the state? Do these figures not prove that the policy of the cotton mill corporations in the encouragement of education is having its effect and that the cotton mill employees are reciprocating this policy and are evidencing a desire to secure to their children advantages which they themselves were not able to have before their advent to the mills? Do not these figures prove that the policy of the mill

corporations to install a school at each mill village is having its natural result in the education and cultivation of the employees, and that it is a wise policy of the corporation not to be limited by the public school fund, and schools of from three to five months in duration, but to establish schools in large part paid for out of the funds of the corporation and maintained for from seven to ten months in the year?

In conclusion, do not these school statistics clearly show that the cotton mill corporations and the employees of these corporations have nothing to fear from a compulsory education law, but have everything to gain, inasmuch as such a law will be applicable to all classes of people and would force the same degree of school attendance upon other classes as is sought for and desired in behalf of the cotton mill employees?